

what it meant to suffer for what he believed.

I stand today proud to be an American because men like Gene Boyt lived and died protecting that right. He was awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, three Presidential Citations, the Philippines's Presidential Citation Medal, and the Oklahoma Medal of Valor. He deserves to be honored once again today on the Senate floor.

Today I stand in tribute to one of Oklahoma's favorite sons, a great American hero and devoted family man. Gene Boyt sacrificed everything for his country, and I am sure that his family is proud of this great man, and the legacy he left behind. The thoughts and prayers of a grateful Nation are with them during this difficult time.●

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

HONORING MILITARY RESERVISTS AND THEIR SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYERS DURING NATIONAL EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE WEEK

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, as this is National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, it seems an appropriate time to speak on the honorable Americans serving in our National Guard and Reserve.

To fight our wars and to meet our military responsibilities, the United States supplements its regular, standing military with a capable band of citizen soldiers, reservists who serve nobly and continue to make the ultimate sacrifice for this country. At present, there are about 165,000 national guardsmen and reservists on active duty—more than half of the 300,000 called to active duty since September 11. They serve admirably around the world, performing critical wartime functions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. This country does not go into battle without members of the National Guard and Reserve, and we should be grateful for their service.

Instead of gratitude, members of the Guard and Reserve find the Bush administration's military agenda leaving them behind. In addition, earlier this year, the Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives sought to cut reservist pay by 40 percent for normal peacetime training requirements. The Republican majority in the U.S. Senate blocked efforts to extend health care benefits to Guard and Reserve members. Just this month, the Republican majority in Congress voted against legislation by Senator DURBIN that would have provided supplemental income for Federal employees who are called up to active duty. These efforts are wrong and demonstrate the misplaced priorities of the Republican Party.

To make matters worse, the Bush administration recently announced that it would require thousands of National Guard and Army Reserve troops to ex-

tend their tours of duty up for an additional six months. This extension will cause significant economic difficulties for the reservists, their families, their employers, and our national economy.

Beyond the hardship of leaving their families, their homes and their regular employment, more than one-third of military reservists and National Guard members face a pay cut when they're called for active duty. Many of these reservists have families who depend upon that paycheck and can least afford a substantial reduction in pay.

The United States Chamber of Commerce estimates that 70 percent of military reservists called to active duty work in small- or medium-size companies. The continued activation of military reservists to serve in Iraq and the broader war on terrorism has imposed a tremendous burden on many of our country's small businesses. Too many of these businesses, when their employees are asked to leave their jobs and serve the Nation, are unable to continue operating successfully—resulting in severe financial difficulty and even bankruptcy. Large businesses have the resources to provide supplemental income to reservist employees called up for active duty and to replace them with a temporary employee. However, many small businesses are unable to provide this assistance or temporarily cover the reservist's duties.

The Federal Government has an obligation to help small businesses weather the loss of an employee to a call-up and a duty to protect small business employees and their families from suffering a pay cut to serve our Nation. It is imperative that we help families of reservists maintain their standard of living while their loved one protects our country abroad.

That is why I have proposed creating a Small Business Military Reservist Tax Credit, which does two things. First, it provides an immediate Federal income tax credit to any small business to help with the cost of temporarily replacing a reservist employee that has been called up to active duty. Second, it provides a tax credit to small businesses that pay any difference in salary for an employee who is called up. This tax credit is worth up to \$12,000 to any small business and up to \$20,000 for small manufacturers.

It is common knowledge that small businesses continue to be our most effective tool at creating new jobs and spurring economic growth nationwide. Small businesses employ over 50 percent of the Nation's work force. Across the country, small businesses are currently creating 75 percent of new jobs. Furthermore, many of these small businesses provide quality goods and services that are a vital link in the supply chain for national defense. Many of these small companies need immediate help to keep their business going while their employees encounter tremendous personal sacrifice in service of our country.

This assistance will immediately help struggling entrepreneurs keep

their small businesses running during the loss of an employee to temporary military service. It will also help the families of military reservists cope with the financial burden of their absence. In this way we ensure that we preserve our great tradition of citizen soldiers at such a critical time in the Nation's history.

In his speech designating this week National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, President Bush recognized several large businesses for their support of the Guard and Reserve. I, too, commend these big corporations for their support of our reservists and guardsmen, but the President has again showed that he doesn't understand the plight of our military reservists and their smaller employers. The fact is big businesses, like those the President recently honored, aren't going out of business if one of their reservist employees is called up. Small businesses may.

My legislation provides a real solution—helping small businesses maintain productivity and helping make up the difference for reservists who face pay cuts when they're deployed—not just a pat on the back that this week provides. I urge the President and all of my colleagues to support my proposal.●

HONORING NOR-LEA GENERAL HOSPITAL

● Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, today I recognize the outstanding achievement of a hospital in my home State of New Mexico. Nor-Lea General Hospital, which is located in Lovington, New Mexico, was recently honored as one of the Nation's "Top 100" Hospitals by Solucient Corporation, a healthcare information company, in their 10th National Benchmarks for Success study. Nor-Lea was recognized because they have demonstrated superior clinical, operational, and financial performance in overall service.

I am proud to recognize Nor-Lea Hospital for its strong commitment to help the community. Too often we hear about hospitals that are struggling; hospitals asserting they can not save money and improve patient services and thus are not able to meet the needs of their communities.

Nor-Lea represents the exception. They represent the value of management, not only to save money, but also to improve efficiency. Nor-Lea is demonstrating what kind of performance is possible when this is done and they are setting new targets for performance improvement across the industry.

Nor-Lea General Hospital is a 25-bed Medicare-certified facility. Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance and private pay are accepted for services rendered. Nor-Lea General Hospital offers comprehensive outpatient services, which include a state-of-the-art laboratory facility with national lab affiliations, radiology services, MRI, bone densitometry, fluoroscopy, x-ray, ultrasound, and respiratory services.